

Los Angeles County Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures

:: NEWS BULLETIN ::

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“TIS THE SEASON TO BE MERRY (AND BE WARY!)”

COUNTY SEALER URGES HOLIDAY SHOPPERS

TO CHECK THEIR RECEIPTS

ALSO: LISTING OF LATEST COMPLETED SCANNER OVERCHARGE CASES

“During this busy and rushed holiday season, with stores crowded and sales everywhere, we all need to be extra alert that we are charged correctly for our purchases,” said Cato R. Fiksdal, Los Angeles County Sealer of Weights and Measures. Mr. Fiksdal urged shoppers to take their time and make sure the prices they are charged match the prices posted on the store shelves.

“Shopping can be hectic enough throughout the year, but between Thanksgiving and New Years the potential for errors at the checkstand increases,” he continued.

Problems shoppers face include all of the following:

- Seasonal help that may not be aware of which items have gone on sale, or familiar with store policy should an overcharge occur.
- The number of promotional items in stores increase dramatically. Not all of these promotions may have the correct price entered in the electronic checkout computer. Surveys by weights and measures staff over the years confirm that the sale prices consumers assumed they would receive are not always taken at the checkstand.
- Percentage discounts incorrectly calculated. Stores resort to percent discount sales to move merchandise. Inspections have found these discounts to be often incorrectly calculated, resulting in overcharges to the consumer.

Mr. Fiksdal reminded shoppers to “Take your time, and take your calculator.”

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Listed below are cases completed during the month of May, 2002.

1. **Albertson's Inc. #6142, 4155 Tweedy Blvd., South Gate**

Date of offense: 11/07/2001
Charges: 3 counts of scanner overcharge
Convictions: 1 count, nolo contendere
Fines and fees: \$649

2. **KMart #4474, 19330 Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance**

Date of offense: 11/22/01
Charges: 4 counts of scanner overcharge
Convictions: 2 counts, nolo contendere, 18 mos probation
Fines and fees: \$2627

3. **Mervyn's #68, 8800 Corbin Ave., Northridge**

Date of offense: 10/24/01
Charges: 1 count of scanner overcharge
Convictions: nolo contendere
Fines and fees: \$1028

4. **Officemax, Inc. #608, 8985 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles**

Date of offense: 10/25/01
Charges: 3 counts of scanner overcharge
Convictions: 1 count, nolo contendere
Fines and fees: \$1371

5. **Officemax, Inc. #634, 18050 Chatsworth, Granada Hills**

Date of offense: 10/24/01
Charges: 3 counts of scanner overcharge
Convictions: 2 counts, nolo contendere
Fines and fees: \$2046

6. **Target Stores #200, 3433 Sepulveda Blvd., Torrance**

Date of offense: 01/04/02
Charges: 2 counts of scanner overcharge
Convictions: 2 counts, nolo contendere
Fines and fees: \$2754, 12 mos probation